



MEDIA RELEASE

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SWIFT Announces \$10.4 Million Dufferin County Broadband Expansion Plan

Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) has awarded contracts to support five fibre-optic broadband projects to deliver high-speed internet to more than approximately 1,660 households and businesses within Dufferin County.

"Expanding high-speed broadband access to underserved areas within Southwestern Ontario is essential to the economic recovery and long-term prosperity of our region," says SWIFT Board Chair, David Mayberry. "SWIFT, in partnership with the Government of Ontario and Canada, is proud to announce that funding has been awarded to support five fibre-to-the-home projects to expand broadband services across Dufferin County. The newly announced projects will assist in accelerating the rollout of high-speed internet to further support economic development within the region and continue to improve quality of life for our residents."

"I am very pleased to tell our residents that SWIFT construction is getting underway in five areas of Dufferin County" says Dufferin County Warden, Darren White. "Over the past six months, as more people work and learn from home, the need for high speed, reliable internet has only been heightened and these five projects are an excellent step towards addressing this problem."

\$6 million in funding has been awarded by SWIFT, including a \$1.3 million investment from the County of Dufferin, to support infrastructure development in communities throughout East Garafraxa, Mulmur, Amaranth and Melancthon. In total the County will receive approximately \$10.4 million in broadband upgrades, including nearly \$4.4 million in contributions from the internet service providers.

SWIFT has signed an agreement with North Frontenac Telephone Corporation Limited (NFTC) to deploy fibre cabling along more than 40 kilometres of underserved roads in the communities of Laurel and Camilla. The County of Dufferin has contributed an additional \$1.3 million to support the \$4 million fibre-optic project that will bring high-speed internet service to approximately 460 premises by early-2022.

"NFTC has a proud history of serving rural Ontario customers for over 60 years. COVID-19 has placed an even greater urgency on bridging the divide between rural and urban broadband availability," says Grant Roughley, Vice President, NFTC. "Our partnership with SWIFT allows us to continue to invest in the expansion of our high-speed, pure fibre optic networks in rural Ontario and extend fibre connectivity to the underserved citizens and businesses in the affected regions."



SWIFT has also awarded a contract to Eh!tel Networks (Eh!tel) to install fibre-optic broadband along approximately 55 kilometres of underserved roads throughout the communities of Redickville, Honeywood, Black Bank, Ruskview, Terra Nova, Kilgorie, Horning's Mills, Whitfield and Springwater Lakes to increase high-speed connectivity to nearly 650 premises. The \$4 million fibre-to-the-home project is expected to be completed with service available by late-2022.

"Providing broadband access to all Canadians is a monumental and complex task. Without funding for new high-capacity rural networks, costs would remain prohibitive," says Antonius Peeters, CEO and President, Eh!tel. "The funding received from the federal and provincial governments, supported through SWIFT, enables these projects to move forward, stimulate competition and encourage partnerships."

Cogeco Connexion Inc. (Cogeco) is among the service providers that will also receive funding to deploy fibre-cabling along more than 13 kilometres of underserved roads in the communities of Marsville, Orton, Prices Corner and Craigsholme. The approximately \$870,000 fibre-to-the-home solution will deliver high-speed connectivity to 145 households and businesses by early-2022.

"Expanding our network to Dufferin County is a priority for Cogeco and is part of our four-year commitment to invest more than \$1 billion in the operation and expansion of our robust broadband network. We are proud to have been selected by SWIFT to proceed with our proposed expansion in the County," says Michel Blais, Vice President, Network, Operations and Technology Delivery, Cogeco. "We are thrilled to support the County's vision to offer a powerful, reliable and affordable Fibre network as well as contributing to the Government's goal to accelerate high-speed internet access to all Ontarians."

Bell Canada will also install an all-fibre network to service approximately 17 kilometres of roadway in the community of Mansfield. The \$830,000 project has been awarded funding to bring high-speed broadband to more than 300 premises by early 2022.

Rogers Communications (Rogers) will also receive funding to take fibre-optic broadband along approximately 5 kilometres of roadway to bring high-speed internet to 108 homes in the community of Garafraxa Woods. The nearly \$690,000 fibre-to-the-home project is expected to deliver service to the community by Fall 2021.

"We are committed to expanding our network and helping underserved communities access high-speed internet," says Eric Bruno, SVP – 5G, Content and Connected Home Products, Rogers Communications. "Through our partnerships with SWIFT and the Governments of Canada and Ontario, we are offering our leading broadband service to more Canadians to keep them connected to what matters most."



"SWIFT continues to make steady progress in delivering on its commitment to expand network coverage throughout Southwestern Ontario," says SWIFT Executive Director, Barry Field. "From education to health care to attracting next generation jobs, broadband access is essential. With today's announcement, more than \$10.4 million in broadband upgrades is being invested into Dufferin County to expand high-speed service to support business growth and help communities thrive."

As part of SWIFT's commitment to expand broadband services across Southwestern Ontario, the newly announced projects will collectively service more than 130 kilometres of underserved roads to improve access to high-speed internet throughout the County.

Additional Information:

[Dufferin County Project Overview](#)

About SWIFT

Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) is a non-profit regional broadband project initiated by the [Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus](#) to subsidize the construction of high-speed broadband networks across Southwestern Ontario, Caledon and the Niagara Region.

The project was approved for funding up to \$127.4 million under the New Building Canada Fund – Small Communities Fund (NBCF-SCF), a joint federal and provincial infrastructure funding program, and leverages additional funding from municipal partners and private sector investors to bring the total project investment to \$209 million to improve access to broadband services across the region.

For more information:

Melissa O'Brien

melissa.obrien@swiftruralbroadband.ca

Manager, Communications and Stakeholder Relations

Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology

226.256.1640